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Farmers Should Not Go to Law Over Trivial Causes.

An article from the Southern Agri-
culturist contains some good advice,
with several examples given as warn-
ings. We should extend the scope
of the title by saying. Farmers nor
any one else, etc., etc.

After thirty years experience in the
courts as a lawyer, I desire to issue a
warning to the farmers of the country
against going to law over small mat-
ters, and, indeed, over matters of any
kind, large or small, as long as it can
be avoided. Law suits, at the best,
are uncertain, and the records of the
courts abound in instances where
financial wreck and ruin to families
in easy circumstances have followed
the institution of suits, begun in the
utmost good faith, and apparently
without the least shadow of a chance
to fail of success. And, again, the
record abounds with instances where
the parties have come to grief be-
cause they went to law over some triv-
ial matter to gratify a grudge, or to
revenge a real or imaginary insult,
or to spite an adversary. In this lat-
ter kind of cases, the guilty party,
if he meets defeat, is entitled to no
sympathy, but, in the majority of
such cases, the innocent are involved
and suffer along with the guilty, and
our sympathies are always aroused
when we see the innocent suffer for
the misdeeds of the wicked.

I have in mind some instances that
show the follw of going to law over
small matters, and will recite a few
of them, leaving off the names where
they do not appear in the reported
cases:

Just before the war between the
States, there lived in Hancock Coun-
ty, in this State, a man by the name
of Wolfenbargo, and another by the
name of Stanford. Wolfenbargo was
a man of some means, and was the
constable in his district, and there
was placed in his hands an execution
issued by a justice of the peace,
for a few dollars, against Stanford,
and he levied this execution on a
small calf, of the value of, perhaps,
two dollars as the property of Stan-
ford. Stanford brought an action of
replevy to recover the calf, and the
case was appealed from the justice of
the peace to the circuit court, and
after two or three mistrials, there was

a judgment in that court, and an ap-
peal was taken to the supreme court.
The supreme court held that the calf,
though a bull, was a steer in the
sense of the law, and was not sub-
ject to seizure on the execution, un-
der the exemption laws, and decided
the case against Wolfenbargo, and
judged the cost against him, and this
cost and his lawyer fees took his lit-
tle farm, and he was left homeless
with several small children. (This
case is reported).

Another case from the same neigh-
borhood is worthy of mention. Two
men, Mr. R. and Mr. H., lived on ad-
joining farms. The daughter of Mr.
R., over the protest of her father, mar-
ried the son of Mr. H., but after some
years Mr. R. apparently became recon-
ciled to his daughter's marriage, and
either gave or loaned her a cow of
the value of about twelve dollars.
The daughter and her husband, pre-
paratory to going East, sold the cow
to a neighbor, a Mr. G., and, after the
daughter was gone, her father and
Mr. G. got into a litigation over the
cow. The suit originated before a jus-
tice of the peace, and was appealed
to the circuit court, and from the cir-
cuit court to the supreme court. The
supreme court reversed it and sent it
back for a new trial, and after anoth-
er trial in the court below, it was tak-
en to the supreme court again, and,
after worrying with it for several
years, it was finally decided against
Mr. R. The costs and attorney's fees
in the cause are said to have been
about \$1,300, and, as a result, Mr. R.
lost his farm and his family was left
homeless.

There is another case growing out
of a dispute over a mule worth about
forty dollars that I will mention: Mr.
P. and Mr. M. got into a dispute soon
after the war, over the title to this
mule, and got into litigation. This
case also originated before a justice
of the peace, and was taken to the
circuit court, and from the circuit
court to the supreme court. The su-
preme court remanded the cause, and
there was then a change of venue to
another county. The cost, because of
the large number of witnesses, the dis-
tance they had to travel, and the
length of time the case was pending,
amounted, it is said, to \$1,200, and
the loosing party had it all to pay.

There cases all grew out of disputes
over personal property, but disputes
over real estate, with similar results,
are not infrequent. A few years since,
in the State of Virginia, two wealthy
adjoining land owners got into a dis-
pute over a parcel of land containing
not more than one-eighth of an acre,
and worth, perhaps, ten dollars. For-
merly the dividing line between the
two farms was a small branch that
had no definite channel. At times the
branch flowed at one place and at
other times, because of freshets chang-
ing its bed, it flowed at other places,
and to settle and fix an unchanging
line, for former adjoining owners
agreed upon a line and built a fence
on it. After the death of the former
owners, their successors got into a dis-
pute over the line, and, both being
wealthy and stubborn, it seemed to
be a fight to the finish. The best
council was employed on both sides,
and the country was raked for every
particle of evidence that could have
any bearing either way, and, as a re-
sult, the witnesses were exceedingly
numerous, but, after three mistrials,
through the influence of friends, a

compromise was made in which the
costs were divided, and the cause dis-
missed. The costs and attorney's fees
on each side amounted, in round num-
bers, to \$1,000.

There is still another case that I
will mention. This case grew out of
a dispute over about two acres of land,
lying right on top of a mountain, and
worth not over \$10. The parties lawed
until they exhausted themselves, and
made enemies for life, and the court
finally decided that neither had title to
the land in dispute. The costs of this
case have not yet been taxed, and I
cannot say what they are, but it is
safe to say that they are ten times
the value of the land in controversy.

It is always safer and the better
plan to exhaust all other means be-
fore resorting to the courts to settle
difficulties, and, in settling difficulties,
the Scripture say: "Agree with thine
adversary quickly."

Among the successful farmers of this
section are the Phillips Brothers, who
have a place on Lake Hollingsworth.
These two gentlemen came here from
Arkansas about two years ago, and al-
though wholly unfamiliar with the con-
ditions in this new country, have de-
monstrated what industry and intelligent
methods can accomplish. A few days
ago they shipped 102 crates of celery,
being a part of a crop grown on a quar-
ter of an acre. From this little area they
are marketing a total of 280 crates.
With the exception of shipment noted
they have sold the crop at \$2 per crate
at the platform here. The 102 crates
will net them a better price than this,
and thier clear returns from this one
fourth acre will therefore be approxi-
mately \$600. The writer has sampled
this celery, and it is as good as can be
produced anywhere. The Messrs. Phil-
lips are also successfully growing a va-
riety of other products.—Lakeland News.

An Edge Test

Perhaps your knife, when newly
sharpened, will cut paper, but whittle
hard wood for a few minutes—then try
it. If you want a Knife, a Saw, a Chisel, a
Plane, a Drawing-knife, or any edged tool that
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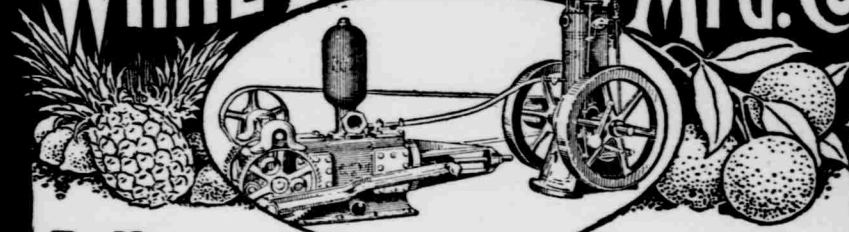
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economical, runs easily, makes little
noise and is entirely satisfactory.
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your inquiry, we are,
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EVERGREEN CEMETERY CO.
W. M. Davant, Vice-President.